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ABSTRACT

This Pennsylvania state curriculum guide provides a rationale and plan for the inclusion and role of arts education in a K-12 curriculum. Part 1, "Actions of the Arts Process," describes concepts related to the terms art, artists, and the arts process and suggests that students need to experience perceiving, responding, understanding, creating, evaluating, and the developing of arts-related skills. These processes are described as interdependent, interrelated, nonsequential, and intertwined. Part 2, "The Arts Encompass the Entire Range of Art, Dance, Drama, Filmmaking and Photography, Music, and Writing," elaborates on the role of each process component of these arts. Part 3, "Potentials of the Arts Process," presents an 18-item list of potential student achievements based on an intensification of arts education programs. Part 4, "The Place of the Arts in the Curriculum," proposes treating the arts as a course content area that has the same status and educational responsibility as other major school departments and suggests that this approach need not increase costs. Instead, a readjustment of priorities should be undertaken, so that existing resources are more fully utilized. Pictures are included. (JHP)

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The Arts Process In Basic Education

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The Arts Process In Basic Education

Foreword

The Arts Process in Basic Education reflects, characterizes and synthesizes the rationale for both the inclusion and role of arts education in the total basic education schema. By applying the concepts embodied in this document, we will be better prepared to develop appropriate ways and means of insuring that all students, at all levels, are given the opportunity and resources to experience, through their own abilities, perceptions and thought processes, the modes of learning that are indigenous to the arts world. These modes are referred to in this booklet as perceiving, responding, understanding, creating, evaluating and the development of skills.

The Arts Process, or learning structure derived from the arts, is critical for students to relate both intrinsic sensitivity and intellectual assessment to human consciousness. Additionally, it provides the needed mechanism for leaders and teachers in school districts to develop appropriate linkages between the arts and humanities curriculum in order to attend the course offerings mandated by Pennsylvania's State Board of Education's revised Curriculum Regulation.

Joseph B. DeAngelis

The Arts Process In Basic Education

By Charles B. Fowler

Prepared for the Secretary of Education's Conference on the Arts in Basic Education, May, 1973, this publication is a result of a year's intensive study by Pa. Department of Education Staff and educational consultants with the advice and support of the JDR 3rd FUND.

The Arts Process in Basic Education was first printed in 1973 in conjunction with Pennsylvania's Conference on the Arts in basic Education. The text, as relevant today as it was then, has remained unchanged in subsequent printings. Only dates, staff and program listings have been updated. The original consultants to the project are listed, unchanged. Revisions, in this, the Third Edition, also include minor design changes in typography and layout.

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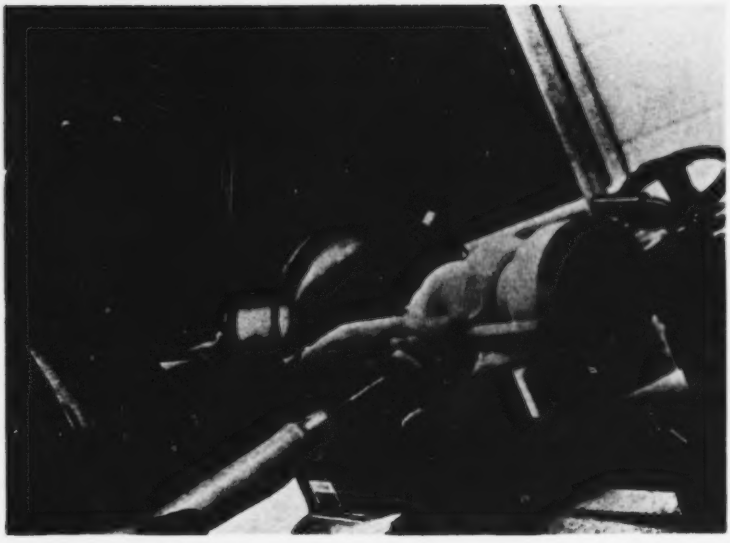


"We just take account of two contrasting sets of facts. First, *the American people are today concerned with humanistic and cultural matters to a degree unprecedented in their history.* And, second, far from reflecting this new concern with humanistic and cultural matters, *the schools of the nation have let the humanities and arts languish.* I do not believe we can long permit such a discrepancy between what people want, and very badly need, and what the schools offer. Educators must stake out a role in the forefront of the new American concern for the intellectual, aesthetic, and spiritual dimensions of life. . . .

"We cannot tolerate another generation that knows so much about preserving and destroying life, but so little about enhancing it. We cannot permit our children to come into their maturity as masters of the atom and of the gene, but ignorant and barbarous about the ways of the human mind and heart."

Alvin C. Eurich
Reforming American Education
(New York: Harper & Row, 1969,
pp. 117 and 122.)

Read the following statements. If you think a statement is true, circle "**T**"; if false, circle "**F**".

1. The arts and entertainment should be thought of as one and the same. **T F**
2. It takes little, if any, education to be an appreciator or audience for the arts. **T F**
3. Arts education is primarily for the artistically gifted. **T F**
4. Schools have an arts program when they include some offerings in music and/or the visual arts. **T F**
5. Quality in arts education is determined by exclusion of people. **T F**
6. All the resources for arts education are vested in the special arts teachers in the schools. **T F**
7. Thinking is a totally abstract process more akin to what happens in mathematics than the arts. **T F**
8. In the school environment, creativity is less important than conformity. **T F**
9. Skills developed in arts education have little or no relationship to skills developed in other subject matters. **T F**
10. Arts education should be thought of more in terms of product than process. **T F**

If you indicated that all of the statements above were false, you have some understanding of what function an arts program can serve as part of basic education. You also recognize a number of widely held misconceptions that prevent learning experiences in the arts from assuming a vital role in the education of every person.

The exposition that follows provides the rationale for focusing arts education on process. It also suggests how arts education and the arts process might be adapted to serve all the subject matters of basic education. Given such a refocusing and adaptation, basic education stands to gain an important ally.

ACTIONS OF THE ARTS PROCESS

THE ARTS

intensify and clairfy the human experience intrinsically and symbolically.
reveal connections between the inner self and outer reality, between emotional engagement and intellectual objectivity.
form statements of human experience.
enable people to feel what they know and to know what they feel.
release emotional and physical energies.

ARTISTS ARE

explorers, searching and discovering significant experience.
appraisers, formulating value judgements about the world.
transformers, dealing, in revelation.
communicators, perceiving and responding to social and physical environments.
perfectors, exercising their imaginations and polishing their techniques to give exactness and impact to their insights.

THE ARTS PROCESS

In the educational environment the artist's modes of activity are translated into process. To become explorers, appraisers, transformers, communicators, and perfectors (or, in other words, to function as an artist) students need to experience perceiving, responding, understanding, creating, evaluating, and development of skills. Together these six components form a structure for learning in the arts that can be defined as "the arts process."

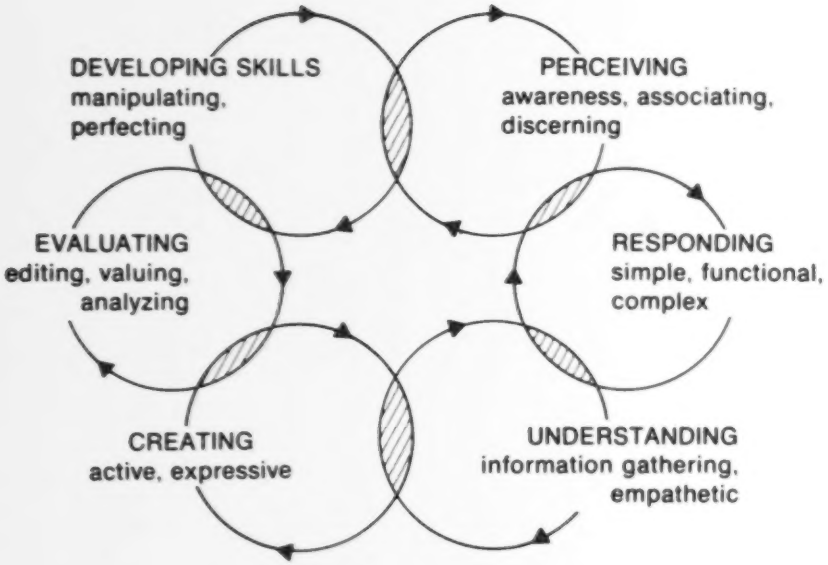
THESE ACTIONS ARE

interdependent - one cannot function without the other.

interrelated - each provides experience that nurtures the others.

nonsequential - one does not necessarily precede another.

intertwined - but each requires deliberate attention.



The Arts Encompass The Entire Range Of Art, Dance, Drama, Filmmaking And Photography, Music and Writing

Active **PERCEIVING** implies more than initial awareness. It takes the person beyond recognition, identification or categorization. Imagination is stimulated, ideas are triggered and discerning scrutiny is achieved.

Active **RESPONDING** involves the person in recognizing feelings and reactions to an event or an object. It is response that sets us into action. It may be as simple as an internalized feeling of pleasure or displeasure, or as complex as seeking additional information, striving to solve a problem, or looking for a way to express what one has felt or experienced. Responding is the opposite of indifference, of being disengaged and oblivious. As the imagination develops through keener perception, positive responses tend to multiply and become more varied. Divergence of response is an accepted and valued characteristic of the total arts process.

Active **UNDERSTANDING** results from the generalizations we form from the comprehensions we acquire. In the arts, understanding is a process with many options. One individual may turn to textbooks, references, recordings, or to listening to what others say about a particular subject. Another individual may begin by fiddling with equipment or materials and trying to figure it out for himself. Whatever the means, understanding is a fundamental component of the arts process.

Active **CREATING** maximizes the uniqueness of people. The person has the opportunity to act in a highly individualized way within the framework of a particular mode of artistic expression. Words or syllables may be selected or invented for the connotations, the rhythms, or the sounds they make. Patterns of movement may be choreographed to accompany sounds selected from the environment. Gesture and words may be combined. Sounds may be composed. Shapes and textures can be applied to paper or canvas or sculpted in clay, metal or wood. Images can be captured on film. Through such means empathetic understanding, feelings and ideas are expressed. Creating involves such intellectual functions as goal-making and revising, selecting, planning, predicting, experiment, ordering and evaluating.

Active **EVALUATION** attends every step in the act of creating and interpreting. Decisions are made throughout the arts-learning process - the artistic mode, the choices of tones, gestures, movements, colors, shapes, patterns, textures, rhythms, the overall form, and every other facet of the work at hand. As a part of the creative component, evaluating can be equated with editing. The artist edits in and edits out until there is a feeling of rightness or completion.

Evaluating is also a procedure applied by a viewer or listener. Those who would be an audience for art not only perceive it and respond to it, but they also generally interpret it for themselves. Consciously or unconsciously they analyze the event or object on the basis of aesthetic criteria, whether those criteria are implicit or explicit. Past artistic experiences establish a value system which is applied to new experiences. New experiences modify or reinforce a person's value system and the evaluating criteria evolve as selective discriminations are made throughout one's life.

Active **DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS** is required in the arts process. Manipulatory skills and precise use of the body take time and perseverance. Self-discipline comes from perceiving need and responding to challenge. Again there is an obvious overlap among the components.

This highly integrated structure for learning - the arts process - has a unique function to fulfill in the context of basic education. The six components of this process are compatible with and conducive to learning in all subject-matter areas. They require that the student invest more of his personal self in the learning process. The simple reason for this is that the components inherent in the arts experience make maximum use of diverse, individualized capacities. They take into serious account the fact that the person's whole being affects what, how, when, where, and why learning takes place. In this way they represent a structure that transcends established taxonomies, rigid prescriptions, and traditional theories of learning.

The structure of the arts process assumes a certain humane dimension because it focuses on an *involved* learner. Engagement with the arts is of necessity both personal and active. The inquiry process, as usually applied, fails to recognize the importance of responding - whether this takes the form of some kind of manipulation or verbal activity - and limits creativity to simulation of suggested models. The arts process opens the learning situation to total involvement of self. Indeed, evaluation is viewed not only from the point of view of the teacher, but primarily as *self-evaluation*. The real advantage of the arts process, then, and the reason it should be considered for adoption in basic learning is the degree to which it engages the whole student. The arts process does not depend on contriving ways to involve; it assures involvement because it is naturally involving. It does not have to strive to motivate; it is motivating in itself.

POTENTIALS OF THE ARTS PROCESS

To acknowledge that students possess, as all people do, a broad array of talents and to commit education to the development of those talents is the first priority of basic education. Because the arts, taken collectively, provide widely varied "proving grounds" that call on many talents simultaneously, they merit a central position and role in the education of all people. What *specifically* can students expect to achieve through an intensification of arts processes in their basic education?

Students will experience a greater equilibrium in their lives because the arts involve all their human talents including functions of the mind that are sometimes neglected or slighted. They need not, for example, deny their emotional self, but are invited to explore it for its expressive potential. Education will be viewed as more humane because it involves the individual's total being.

Students will sharpen their perceptions and, as a result, expand their capacity to respond. The arts cultivate a keener aesthetic perception of the sights, sounds, tactile qualities, events, and ideas of the world.

Students will become involved with the quality of life and with discriminating judgment. They will increase their ability to make informed choices and to define their own life-style.

Students will give increased attention to human values. The arts deal with the joyous, tragic, and sublime dimensions of life, provoking people to come to terms with the human condition.

Students will be challanged through the arts to probe their own inner resources and to take measure of their own worth. To ask, "What do I want to say intellectually and emotionally and how can I manipulate my materials so that I can say it *effectively*," is to make demands on one's inner resources. Through the arts the student builds interior autonomy. He carves out an inner space in which he can live.

Students will develop more self-motivation and more positive attitudes. The arts provide an attractive and workable means of stimulating interest in a subject, acquiring knowledge and skills, organizing and formulating concepts, and expressing feelings and ideas. In this sense they reinforce all other learning.

Students will be assured increased opportunities to engage themselves creatively. The arts represent "invitations to invention" that open limitless avenues to express experience with imagination, insight and order. When correctly taught, students are urged to produce their own solutions rather than to reproduce what the teacher suggests.

Students will be provided with a dynamic demonstration of the continuities and discontinuities between the various peoples and cultures of the world. Because the arts focus on primary rather than contrived human concerns, they can penetrate racial and ethnic estrangements and build understanding and respect for differences.

Students will acquire multiple ways to view mankind, seeing people in relation to culture, artifacts, and stylistic periods and in this way come to know and appreciate better the achievements of their own time. Through the arts students will see man at his best.

Students will come into contact with a number of symbolic coding systems with their own technical and interpretive components. These systems will extend the range of their expressive and communicative possibilities. These experiences will also help students learn that the verbal statement is not necessarily truer or more effective than other kinds of statements. In this way the arts expand one's symbolic options.

Students will develop their manipulatory skills toward the goal of being able to make the artistic medium express what they want it to. In connection with this, the capacity for self-evaluation will be explored and expanded.

Students will experience a healthy means of releasing tensions, of achieving emotional peak experiences, transcending the material-cognitive limits of existence. The arts offer their own ecstasy and release that transcends the intellect and reaches higher levels of consciousness.

Students will develop inter-personal capacities through cooperative and coordinated group enterprises such as role-playing, improvisations with sound, or filmmaking, which require a team effort. In the arts a student is often asked to assume a *persona;* that is, to abandon his own personality in favor of the object, enabling the person to share others' experience inside himself.

Students will be encouraged to stimulate their senses of curiosity and wonderment, qualities that have a direct effect on their approach to all subject-matter learning and to all of life.

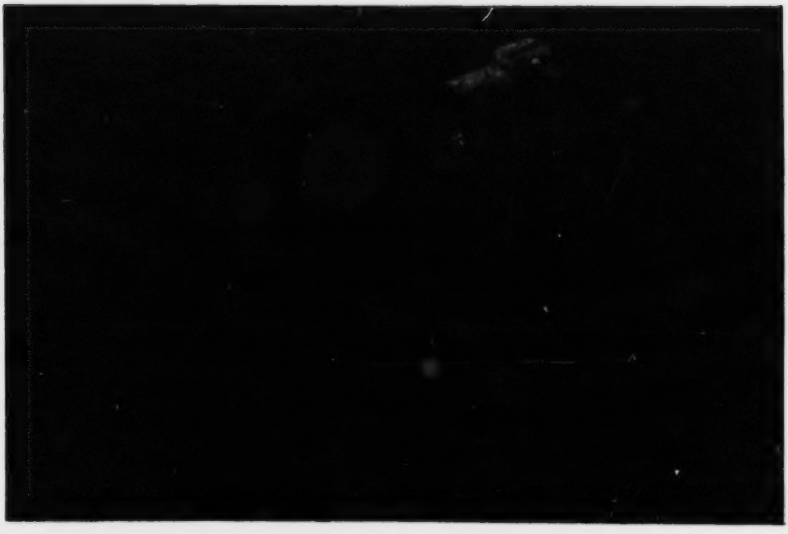
Students will be confronted by the need for honesty. In the creative and interpretive tasks, to withhold, counterfeit, circumvent, misrepresent, or bluff is to cheat oneself. By forcing an open, head-on confrontation with one's own views, abilities, and deficiencies, the arts encourage the development of integrity and self-respect.

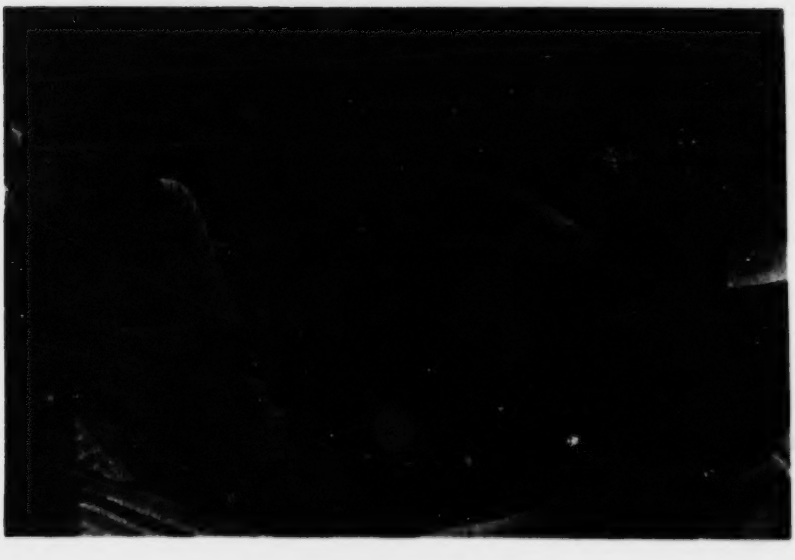
Students will be stimulated toward more sustained engagement. In the arts, imperfection induces self-activation. Challenge promotes self-discipline. Persistence is rewarded by the quality of the product.

Students will find that the unendurable is made more endurable. The arts provide vents for frustration. In a way, frustration becomes a positive force stimulating the search for an expressive counterpart. Insecurity, dissatisfaction, thwarted desires, inner conflicts, and other unresolved problems are treated in the arts as pre-creative conditions.

Students will enjoy a more humanized total school environment. The arts help to humanize teachers as well as students. Worthwhile play is a natural complement to worthwhile work. The joyful, enlivening engagement experienced in the arts can be transferred to other endeavors. But more than this, research has shown that when the school environment is humanized, the rate of learning increases. Attendance of both students and teachers improves. Students become more self-motivated and self-disciplined.

Artistically gifted students will experience satisfying and valuable means to explore and develop their composite talents and abilities. Through the arts background their basic education provides, they are impelled to discover and pursue the arts as a life-time commitment, area of service, or career.





THE PLACE OF THE ARTS IN THE CURRICULUM

The goal is the utilization of the arts process as an integral part of basic education. One prerequisite to attainment of this goal is to treat all the arts, collectively, as a content area that has the same status and educational responsibility as other major departments. The first step to accomplishing this goal is to view the arts *comprehensively*.

The comprehensive view is advantageous. It immediately helps to organize the segmented, varied arts offerings in a school into one cohesive area of curriculum with unified goals and evaluative procedures. Properly conceived, the arts constitute a great integrating force in the school curriculum. To achieve such an end they must be viewed as a component of every discipline, for their subject matter is as broad as life itself.

The arts have always dealt with the vital concerns of contemporary man. To bring them into relation with the total curriculum is to assure that disciplines do not become divorced from the vital concerns of present-day society. Such an approach permits the arts to be viewed as alternative means of understanding subject matter or processes that at the same time complement and are integral to the total basic education program.

To understand the concept of the arts in basic education it is necessary to go one step further, to give attention to what is meant by the word "in" - the arts *in* basic education. The term "in" does not simply mean "as part of." True, the arts are now largely peripheral to the curriculum. But the arts *in* basic education means more than that they become part of the curriculum. It means they are *infused* throughout the curriculum.

All the major subject-matter disciplines have aesthetic components that can provide bases for incorporation of the arts into basic education. Infuse, according to Webster's "implies the introducing into one thing of a second that gives life, vigor, or new significance." The idea of the arts in basic education means that the arts will be infused with other major areas of the curriculum in such a way that they mutually nourish one another to the benefit of all students. In other words, the arts ought to *permeate* the subject matter in the schools.

Infusion is not correlation. It implies far more than a world cultures course that uses the arts of a people as illustrative material only, or a physical education program that gives cursory attention to dance through square or social dancing, or an elementary program which occasionally allows the students to "act out" a story or illustrate student-written haiku for the class poetry brook. It means more than an occasional excursion to a museum, theater, or concert.

Infusion signifies that the arts should be thought of and incorporated as interdisciplinary studies that are the responsibility of *all* teachers. Such a program - designed to bring all the arts to all students through all the subject matter in the school - must be the primary focus of arts education. This philosophy would also encompass specialized arts courses that treat the subject matter of the arts as discrete disciplines.

Thinking in terms of the arts immediately enlarges the sense orientation in which teachers of all subjects operate. Instead of thinking primarily in terms of the visual, the arts help teachers to incorporate a greater emphasis on hearing, touch, and even the senses of taste and smell. To broaden the sense orientation means that students experience a greater variety of avenues for personal involvement and reaction to the world around them. The arts also provide root experiences with the five natural phenomena: sound, light, motion, time, and space. Acquaintance with these phenomena forms much of the basis for understanding the world at large.

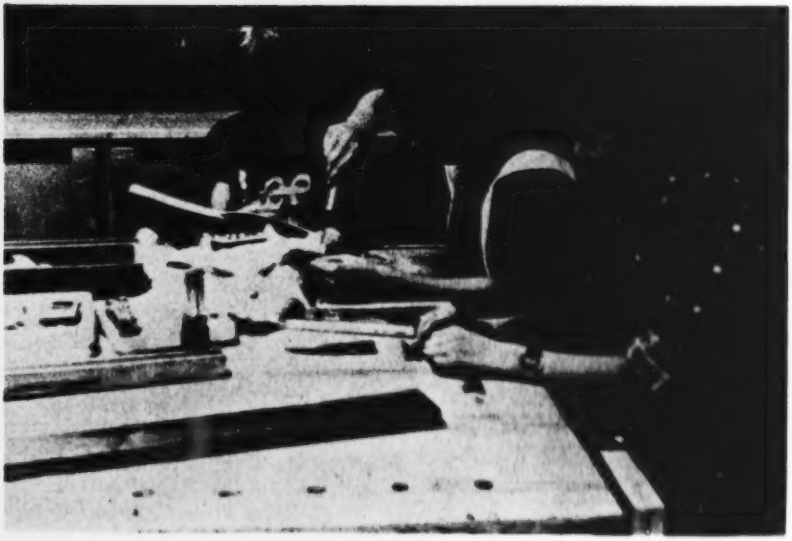
From the concept of the arts in basic education emerges the idea of treating the arts staff as a team that functions in relation to the other components of the curriculum. The arts in basic education means that specialists must take a broader stance. The painter finds ways to relate to social studies concepts and inquiries. Experiences in movement grow through and out of mathematics. Sound and its expressive possibilities are explored in relation to a project in science.

The arts infuse into subject-matter teaching something so wholly new that teachers begin to ask students different kinds of questions and expect different kinds of products. The arts represent, by their nature, an interaction with other subject matters because their content spans all of life and touches every area of human existence. They can function as the means to integrate the entire basic education curriculum.

To move the arts into a more central position in the framework of basic education is not to threaten the traditional philosophical hegemony of the intellect over the emotional in human development. On the contrary, the arts, thought of in terms of process, enlist the senses and the physical nature of the human being to awaken *all* the functions of the mind. When taught as process throughout the curriculum, the arts bring a more proper balance between the body and the mind in basic education.

As conceptualized here, the arts in basic education program would not necessarily require the investment of greater school funds, but rather a reallocation of priorities so that existing resources are exploited fully. Arts specialists must be thoroughly committed to the concept and become involved in all planning and formulation. Actual contacts with artists, brought into the school setting, are desirable. Pilot studies have found that when teachers are supported with resources and direction they will implement a braoder program that encompasses the arts.

In the final analysis it is the *density* of the student's learning experience in the arts that will achieve the desired outcomes. The more diversity, the greater the total arts experience. Even with the same overall goals, each arts-in-basic-education program will be unique, depending on such varying factors as community resources, special ethnic concentrations, the imagination, interest, and abilities of teachers, the amount of team effort expended, the quality of staff development, school administrators, curriculum coordinators, and other school personnel.



Read the following statements. If you think a statement is true, circle "**T**"; if false, circle "**F.**"

1. The basic education program should make provision for all teachers to use the arts process to achieve more effective learning. T F
2. The basic education program should assure an interaction between arts personnel and other instructional staff so that the arts permeate all the experiences in the school. T F
3. Arts specialists should function as a team coordinated with teachers throughout the entire basic education program. T F
4. An arts education program encompasses all the arts - dance, drama, film and photography, and writing, as well as art and music - with some staff responsibility guiding each area. T F
5. An arts education program should reach every individual in the school with every art: "All arts for all students." T F
6. An arts education program should provide opportunities for talented students to investigate and develop their capacities in the arts through in-depth study for possible career commitment. T F
7. Community resources should be utilized to broaden and deepen the arts experiences provided in the school and to relate the arts program to the community at large. T F
8. The basic education program should generate a humanized environment that pervades the entire school, an environment that is productive and happy, encouraging self-motivation, self-actualization, and creativity. T F
9. The arts process provides a means of engaging the students on a more personal level, attending areas of response, creativity, and evaluation. T F
10. The arts process provides a ready means to motivate students and in that sense it can enhance learning in every subject-matter area. T F

If you marked all the above statements true, your thinking supports a process-oriented arts program in the framework of basic education. YOU could provide the leadership necessary to establish and proliferate such programs to the benefit of students, teachers, and the entire educational enterprise.

The Arts Process In Basic Education

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